

Green Lodging News

April 2006

Communicating to Staff & Public

Being a green building isn't just about implementing new technologies to save energy, conserve water and reduce utility bills. It also includes sharing information with your employees and the public about what they can do to help your business

Green Lodging News is a publication targeted toward Michigan's hospitality facilities. It is a service of the Energy Office, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth. If you are interested in subscribing to the monthly newsletter, please contact jhsarve@michigan.gov.

Green Tip of the Month

Get rid of antibacterial soaps and cleaners! Using antibacterial products promotes mutations and resistance in bacteria, adding to a global health crisis. There is no research proving that antibacterial products prevent infection or clean better than other products. They may also be more drying to skin than ordinary soaps. Experts say that washing with regular soap and warm water is still one of the best ways to fight germs.

improve its environmental impact. Keep reading for ideas on how to communicate your environmental initiatives to your staff and public.

Public

Informing customers about your efforts will help create market distinction. This can be done in various ways depending on the wants and needs of your facility. You could:

- Post a sign listing the steps your facility has taken to be more green
- Place information about your facility's environmental policy on your Web site.
- Host a tour of your property to educate others about your efforts.
- Utilize customer surveys for feedback on your

facility's efforts.

- Market your facility's environmental initiatives through advertising. If your building is a certified green lodge, use the GLM logo!

- Provide customers with a list of green tips informing them of what they can do during their stay to support your initiatives.

- Act as a mentor to other facilities by sharing your environmental initiatives and successes with other managers or innkeepers.

Staff

Communicating with your staff is important to the success and improvement of your facility. The following are ways to communicate and motivate your employees to be involved.

- Include environmental management practices in job descriptions, performance evaluations and orientation.

- Use a bulletin board in the break room to display information about environmental initiatives and objectives so staff is familiar with your building's efforts and knows how to participate.

- Provide opportunities for employees and yourself to attend educational workshops regarding green lodging or other environmental initiatives.

- Include progress reports on environmental management at regular staff meetings.

- Familiarize staff with the proper operation of equipment to minimize waste created through misuse.

Green Lodging in Other States

Michigan is one of few states to implement a green lodging program. Other states include California, which began its program in 2003, Florida, which launched its program in 2004, Vermont, which established its program in 1999 and Wisconsin, which, like Michigan, is in its pilot phase.

As one of the first states

Many facilities haven't yet jumped on the bandwagon, but there are businesses that are taking advantage of new 'green' programs. Take a look at some other green lodging Web sites and see what green resorts, hotels and bed & breakfasts are doing around the country.

The idea of eco-friendly hotels is not a new concept, but it is becoming more popular to travelers in the U.S. and around the globe.

[Click here](#) to see Florida's Green Lodging site.

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